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REASONS

FOR THE

Passing of the BILL

FOR THE

More Effectual Suppressing

Vice & Immorality,

Humbly Offer'd to

Both Houses of Parliament.

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ONE would think it should be a needless Undertaking in a Christian State, to give Reasons for the Passing of a Bill which it is scarcely possible for any Man that would be accounted a Christian to offer the least Reason against. But the common Degeneracy in this Age and Nation is become such as is hardly to be parallell'd in any History. Therefore I crave leave to lay before the Members of this Honourable House such Considerations as, I humbly conceive, will incline them to believe it not a thing indifferent, whether this *Bill* shall pass, or no.

And first, if we consider the Character which the Sins of *Uncleanness* do bear in Holy Writ, it is plain that those who will own this to be a Revelation from God, must think them to be of the most criminal Nature, and such as will subject those, who live in the Practice of such Sins, to eternal Damnation; from which nothing can save them but Repentance and Amendment of Life. I will select but one or two of those Texts out of the many that might be produc'd to this purpose. The Apostle tells us, *Heb.* xiii. 4. That *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* And lest any should be deluded into false Hopes or slight Thoughts of this Matter, by the Sophistry of prophane Wits, he warns us all, *Eph.* v. 6. 1 *Cor.* vi. 9. *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words*, assuring it for a certain Truth, that *neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate Persons, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, shall Inherit the Kingdom of God.* And therefore does seriously exhort those he writes to, to *Mortifie their Members which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanness, evil Concupiscence; for which Sins*, he tells us, *Col.* iii. 5. *the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Disobedience.*

And

And indeed one may easily conclude there is a greater Contrariety to the Will of God in those Sins, than most others, from this, that the very Approaches to *Uncleanness* are more nicely guarded than to any other kind of Vices. It is only by the Eye, the Hand, or the Ear, that this Devil can enter into the Soul; and if either the very *Right-Eye*, or *Right-Hand*, should offer to betray us, our great Law-giver strictly commands the one to be *pluckt out*, and the other to be *cut off*; and backs it with this Reason, that it is a piece of Violence most highly profitable that these Members should rather perish, than that the whole Body should be cast into Hell, *Matt.* 5. 29, 30. And then as for the *Evil Communication* from the Tongue, which above all, *does corrupt good Manners*, the Apostle strictly commands, That *Fornication, and all Uncleanness should not be so much as once Named amongst us as becometh Saints*, Ephes. 5. 3. And adds, vers. 4. *Neither Filthiness, nor foolish Talking, nor Jesting which are not convenient*: An Admonition which I cannot but wish all Christians would seriously consider, and then *Obscenity* would not pass, as it does with too many, for a *Jest*, and *filthy Talk* would be *Banisht* out of all *Conversation*.

And why a heavier Damnation, and a ſtricter Caution ſhould be given againſt theſe Sins than any other, will not ſeem ſtrange to any one that reflects upon the fatal Conſequences of theſe Crimes, as well with reſpect to our condition in this World, as in the World which is to come.

As to the World to come, the Texts already cited do ſufficiently ſhew that Excluſion from the Preſence of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven; together with a fearful Doom to the dreadful Miſeries of another Place, will be the certain Doom of ſuch Sinners; and the Reaſon is plain to any one that has right apprehenſions of the Holineſs of God, and of the Purity of Heaven.

A Soul debaſed with inordinate Luſt, is thereby ſo unqualified for Communion with God, that the *Heathens* could not but ſee it; who therefore requir'd that all who would be admitted to their Myſteries, ſhould firſt be Purg'd with ſuch Rites as they Inſtituted for that purpoſe. They were ſenſible it was not for the Honour of their Gods, that Men who were not throughly diſtinguiſh'd from Beaſts, ſhould come to keep them company. How much more ſtrictly then will it be requir'd by the Author of our Salvation, who has deſign'd us for the Bleſſed Eſtate in which we

are

are to be like him, and with him, that whoſoever has any hope of this ſhould *purifie himſelf as he is pure.*

And indeed, as there is an utter Antipathy between a Senſual and a Divine Mind, and therefore, *as Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God*; ſo on the contrary, conſider Heaven, and you will find from the Nature of the thing, as well as from the Teſtimony of Scripture, that into that place *no Unclean thing can enter.* Light and Darkneſs, Heaven and Hell, are not at a wider diſtance then Purity and Uncleanneſs; ſo that there is a natural Impoſſibility that a Soul ſhould be Saved ſo utterly indiſpoſed and unqualified for it.

Nor are the Conſequences of the Sins of Uncleanneſs leſs fatal to Mankind, *with reſpect to this Life*; and this under what Capacity ſoever we conſider them, whether in their private Capacity, or with reſpect to their Families, or to the Publick Society.

And 1*ſt*, as to their private Concerns, let the Experience of all Men in all Ages, give in its Teſtimony, and they would ſee not only in Scripture, how the wiſeſt and ſtrongeſt of Men have been overcome, and ruin'd with extravagant

Luſt,

Luſt, but they wou'd find much of the ſame in other Books. Or if they are not given to reading, if they wou'd but look about them in the World, eſpecially in ſuch an Age as this is, they cannot but ſee a multitude of ſad Examples of thoſe that have been ruin'd in like manner. Alas! how often do we our ſelves ſee that Obſervation of the Wiſe-Man verify'd to a tittle. *Prov.* 6. 26. that *by means of a whoriſh Woman a Man is brought to a piece of Bread*; And that *the Adultereſs hunts for the precious Life.* The whole *ſeventh Chapter* alſo contains moſt admirable Obſervations to this purpoſe; amongſt which the 22, 23, 26, and 27. Verſes, are exceeding emphatical: There it is ſaid of a *ſtrange Woman* (ſo the Scripture calls the Woman that is not a Man's own Wife; but there it is eſpecially ſpoken of a Street-walker) ſuch a one *meeting with a Young-man void of Underſtanding, he goes after her ſtraitway, as an Oxe goeth to the Slaughter, or as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks, till a Dart ſtrike through his Liver, as a Bird haſteth to the Snare, and knoweth not that it is for its Life. For ſhe hath caſt down many wounded, yea, many ſtrong Men have been ſlain by her. Her Houſe is the way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of Death.*

2. Next

2. Next, consider how Families are affected with the ill Consequents of this Vice, and we shall find that nothing does so fatally destroy the *Peace*, the *Interest*, and the *Succession* thereof, as the Sins of Uncleanness. And as to the *Peace* and Comfort of Families, I dare appeal to the very Whoremongers and Adulterers, whether they themselves would resent any thing as a higher Injury, and be more disturb'd upon any account, than to have their own Wives or Daughters debauch'd. And indeed, it is observable, That those very Persons who are most Infamous themselves for Corrupting of other Mens Wives and Daughters, are always the most Impatient and Outragious, when-ever those Misfortunes happen to the Dishonour of them, and their own Families.

The *Interest* also of the same is most highly concern'd both in the Chastity of the Wife, and of the Husband: Of the Wife, especially in great Families, since if her Chastity be not preserv'd, the Husband's Estate is in danger to be swept away from his own natural Off-spring. And then, as to the Husband, I believe it will be as soon granted as propos'd, that a Gentleman can with the third of that Charge maintain a Virtuous Wife, and her Family, as a Whore, and her spu-

rious Iſſue. The reaſon is, the Deſires of the one are reaſonable and regular, and conſequently ſatisfy'd with moderate Expences; the Appetites of the other are Looſe, Extravagant, and Boundleſs, and never to be ſufficiently Gratify'd. Beſides, the *Wife* reckons ſhe ſpends of her own, and if ſhe exceeds, her own Children are like to ſuffer for it. But for the *ſtrange Woman*, ſhe is uſually like a Soldier that lives at diſcretion in the Enemies Country, She Hates, and believes ſhe is hated, for ſhe knows there is reaſon for it. Beſides, ſhe cannot forget ſhe has a ſeperate Intereſt from the Family of her Paramour, and therefore her buſineſs is to ſell her ſelf as dear as ſhe can; and if he gives her all that he has, it is leſs valuable than what ſhe has given him. Moreover, poſſibly ſhe has Children by him. If not, yet at leaſt ſhe muſt provide for Old Age. All this while I am ſpeaking but of one ſingle Concubine, which no Lawleſs Man can content himſelf with, no more than he can with one Wife. And if he has many drawing upon him together, they will have ſooner done their Work, which is to Beggar him and his Family. Such infinite reaſon, with reſpect to the *Intereſt* of Families, had the Wiſe-Man for that Caution of his,

Prov. 5. 10. *Remove thy way far from the ſtrange Woman, and come not nigh the Door of her Houſe, leaſt Strangers be fill'd with thy Wealth, and thy Labours be in the Houſe of a Stranger.*

But then if we conſider, how the *Succeſſions* of Families are often extinguiſh'd by means of a Whoriſh Woman; and in what a terrible manner alſo this commonly happens, the laſt and only Hopes of many Families being cut off in a ſenſeleſs impious Duel, fought upon the account of ſome Lewd Strumpet (the moſt uſual Occaſion thereof) this indeed is a Conſideration that does not only bring down the *Gray Hairs* of the unhappy Parents *with Sorrow to the Grave*, but does alſo ſtrike all that hear it with Horror; as well upon that ſcore, as with reſpect to the fearful Sentence at God's Tribunal, which the miſerable Debauchee is gone to receive.

Nor is it to be paſs'd by as unworthy a ſerious Reflection, that though the utter Extinction of Noble Families does not every day happen on this occaſion; yet every day we may ſee what Craſie and Sickly Conſtitutions are to many Succeſſions derived down from the invenom'd Seed of one or other of the vitious Parents to their Innocent Children; ſo that it were happy for them, if the

Succeſſion had ſooner fail'd, and they had never ſeen the Sun. Oh therefore that Men wou'd weigh this, that tho' *the Lips of a ſtrange Woman drop as the Honey-Comb, and her Mouth is ſmoother than Oil; yet her End is bitter as Wormwood, ſharp as a two-edg'd Sword. Her Feet go down to Death, her Steps take hold on Hell*, Prov. 5. 3, 4, 5.

And now laſtly, as to thoſe Miſchiefs to the *Publick* occaſion'd frequently by the Sins of Uncleanneſs; without recurring to Hiſtory, either Sacred or Prophane, (both which give us the Accounts of moſt bloody Wars, and utter Deſolation brought upon whole Countries on the ſcore of a Strumpet, or an Adultreſs, and of the Divine Vengeance upon whole Nations for Crimes of this Nature, when become univerſally prevalent.) I ſhall content my ſelf with laying before You thoſe ſad and fearful Effects of *Lewdneſs*, which may fall under our own Obſervation at this Day, to the very Country we now live in.

And it is not an inconſiderable Evil to the *Publick*, that ſo many Hundred Perſons are Yearly Executed, ſome for *Murthers*, others for *Robberies*, others for *Theft* and *Burglary*; the greateſt part of whom, upon Enquiry, will be found to have been

been entangled in the Snares of *Lewd Women*, or they had never brought their Heads into an Halter. And it was but the laſt Seſſions that I was my ſelf amaz'd to ſee ſo many Young-Men, in the very Bloom of their Years, receive the Sentence of Death for the Crimes now mentioned. And ſpeaking of it, with Concern, to one of the Judges, he told me it has been his Obſervation, ſince he came upon the Bench, That *Whoredom* has generally been the firſt Occaſion of that which brought them to their unhappy End. For theſe Perſons being ſtrongly addicted to their Luſts, and yet of none, or of broken Fortunes, thoſe lewd Women whom they Aſſociate themſelves withal, force them upon thoſe violent means to feed their Luſts, which terminate thus in their utter Ruin.

But the grand Miſchief and Bane of all to the Publick, as well as the high Diſhonour to God, which ariſes from an Addictedneſs to the Sins of *Uncleanneſs*, is *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity*.

Now the Atheiſt is that *Leviathan* that taketh his Paſtime upon the Earth. He knows no Law but his own Will, and therefore indulgeth himſelf in any Wickedneſs that he can ſafely commit; *Adulteries*, *Murther*, *Oppreſſion*, and whatever

ever elſe can be thought of that is monſtrouſly flagitious, and highly miſchievous, he perpetrates to chooſe. *He deviſeth Miſchief upon his Bed, he ſetteth himſelf in no good way, neither doth he abhor any thing that is Evil. He ſlayeth the Widow, and the Stranger, and murthers the Fatherleſs; yet he ſays, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it,* Pſal. 94. 6, 7.

Thus is the *Atheiſt* like ſome wild and ſavage Beaſt, which ravages and deſpoils the whole Voiſenage round about him. But after he has perpetrated ſome horrible Villany, if you will take the pains to trace the mighty and miſchievous Monſter back to his Kennel, you will always lodge him in the Bed of Luſt. It is there he firſt ſuckt in, and was nouriſh'd up in ſavage Principles: It is thence he iſſues out, the Miſchief and Terror of all within his Compaſs. And if you deſire to know why a ſtrong and habitual Addictedneſs to unlawful Pleaſures ſhould ſo fatally, and almoſt inevitably fix Men in Atheiſtical Principles; the Reaſon is, that Senſuality and Filthineſs do, of all other Sins, ſend up ſuch groſs and foul Exhalations as will ſooneſt intercept our View of Heaven. Beſides, theſe do flag the Wings of a thinking, ſoaring Mind,

Mind, so that the Powers and Faculties of the Soul can never rise higher than Sense and Matter. They so defile and muddy the Mind, that it can take in no Spiritual and Divine Ideas, which can be throughly impressed only upon pure and unsullied Intellect.

And if so, if an Evil so highly mischievous to Publick Societies, as well as the Souls of Men, does derive its Being, and all its Force, from the Sins of *Uncleanness*; it ought then to be the especial Care of all Civil Societies to destroy the *Dam* that nourishes and breeds up so foul a Monster. *Principiis obsta* will be a ruling Maxim to all well-govern'd States; and therefore to strangle so fruitful a Parent of Mischief, as Sensual Lusts appear to be, does infinitely become the *WISDOM OF OUR NATION*.

In short, we are, or at least wise profess our selves to be Christians; and as the very original Design and Tendency of Christianity was towards nothing more than to extinguish the *Lusts of Concupiscence which did reign in the Gentiles, who knew not God*, 1 Thess. iv. 5. So we may as well renounce our Christianity it self, as give a National Favour, and publick Allowance to these Enormities; as the not passing of this *Bill* will,

I fear, by many, both at Home and Abroad, be interpreted no leſs.

One thing is moſt certain, That no Man can be againſt it upon the Account of *Religion*; for the Suppreſſion of the Vices of *Uncleanneſs* is a part of Chriſtianity, which Chriſtians of all Denominations, if true to their Principles, can freely come up to. It is not here as in diſputed Matters of Religion, with reſpect to which all are not agreed how far it may be fit for the ſecular Powers to interpoſe. But as all Parties of Chriſtians will conſent to have Immorality reſtrained; So the Immorality that is to be reſtrain'd by this *Bill*, by the Verdict of expreſs Scripture, comes under the Cognizance of the Civil *Magiſtrate*; *It is an heinous Crime, yea, it is an Iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges*, Job. 31. 11. **And that the Judges may have Law to Puniſh it by, is the Thing we humbly deſire of our Legiſlators.**

FINIS.

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